



American basketball coach J.D. Walsh conducts a coaching clinic in Kolkata

AMERICAN CENTER BULLETIN

KOLKATA MAY 2008



The Month at a Glance

May 5:

Program: Discussion on "What Library Users Want" (American Center, Kolkata)

May 5-30:

Contest: Presidential Campaign Trivia Quiz (American Library, Kolkata)

May 19-30:

Program: Dr. Biswarup Sen on "Culture and the New Media" (Kolkata / Bhubaneswar)

May 30:

Film Show: Pretty Woman (American Center, Kolkata)

May 2008:

Program: "U.S. Presidential Elections, 2008" for Exchange Participants' Program Alumni (EPPA) (American Center, Kolkata)

Holiday:

May 26: Memorial Day



AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTY SYMBOLS

When America's founders wrote the constitution of the United States in 1787, they did not envision political parties playing a role in the government. Rather, they expected that constitutional provisions such as separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism and the indirect election of the president by an electoral college would deter the formation of parties.



Despite this, in 1800 the United States became the first nation to develop political parties organized on a national level. By the 1830's political parties were established parts of the U.S. political environment. Today a two-party system dominates in the USA – the Democrat and Republican parties. It is equally intriguing to know that both the parties chose two amazing animals as their party



symbols.

Thomas Jefferson founded the Democratic-Republican Party (which later became the Democratic Party) in 1792 as a congressional caucus to fight for the Bill of Rights and against the elitist Federalist Party. It was President Andrew Jackson who chose the jackass or donkey as the symbol of the party. Its motto is to fight for the interests of working families, fighting for equal opportunities and justice for all Americans. The reason that the donkey was chosen to be the party symbol is that when Andrew Jackson ran for president in 1828, his opponents tried to label him a jackass for his populist views and his slogan "Let the people rule." He, however, used the donkey on his campaign posters. It was further popularized by Thomas Nast, a famous political cartoonist, and was first used in 1870 in Harper's weekly to represent an anti-war faction. According to the Republicans the donkey is silly, stubborn and ridiculous, while the Democrats claim it to be humble, courageous and lovable.

Republicans on the other hand accepted the elephant as their party symbol. The Republican Party was born in the early 1850's by anti-slavery activists and individuals who believed that government should grant western lands to settlers free of charge. Republicans have a long and rich history with basic principles: Individuals, not government, can make the best decisions; all people are entitled to equal rights; and decisions are best made close to home. It was again Thomas Nast who should be credited for inventing the elephant as the Republican Party symbol. In 1874 Nast for the first time portrayed the elephant as the Republican animal symbol. His cartoon showed the elephant being frightened by the donkey dressed in a lion's skin. Later other cartoonists picked up the symbol and started using it to symbolize the Republican Party. The Republicans think the elephant is a symbol of dignity, strength and intelligence, while the Democrats feel that it is stupid, pompous and conservative.

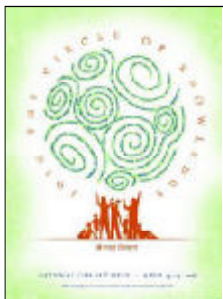
Symbols play an important role in portraying the image of any political party. The donkey and elephant are no exceptions. These symbols not only help a party to represent its ideologies but also depict the socio-political condition of the society.

The American Center, 38A Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Kolkata 700 071
Telephone: 3984-6300; Fax: 2288-1616; E-Mail: kolkatap@state.gov
Web site: <http://kolkata.usconsulate.gov>
Offices are open from 8 am - 5 pm;
The American Library is open from 10 am - 6 pm, Monday - Saturday

PROGRAMS

“WHAT LIBRARY USERS WANT”

May 5, 2008 : American Center, Kolkata



To commemorate the National Library Week, the American Library is organizing a program titled “What Library Users Want” on May 5 at the American Center. The program will celebrate the contributions of libraries, librarians and library workers in schools, campuses and enable them to join the “circle of knowledge @ your library.” This event is a part of the continuing National Library Week that was first organized in 1958, and has grown to be a national observance event sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and American libraries across the world. **Contact: American Library: 3984-6398/ 3984-6399.**

BISWARUP SEN : CULTURE AND THE NEW MEDIA

May 19 - 30 : Kolkata / Bhubaneswar

Dr. Biswarup Sen, Visiting Assistant Professor at University of Oregon will be in Kolkata and Bhubaneswar to deliver lectures and interact with students and journalists on “Culture and the New Media.” Sen has a Doctorate in Communications from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has taught for several years at the Department of English, SUNY-Binghamton. He has also worked as a marketing and communications consultant in both the corporate and non-profit sectors. Sen currently teaches courses in Mass Communications and Popular Culture at the University of Oregon, U.S.A. He has been writing frequently on popular culture in newspapers and journals. Sen’s current research interest lies in investigating relationships between cyberspace, global communication, issues of identity, and voice and writing. **Contact 3984-6326 or sarkarrx@state.gov**



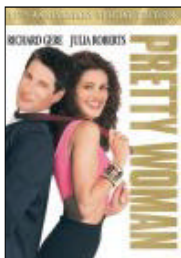
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN TRIVIA QUIZ

May 5 - 30, Kolkata, American Library



As the 2008 Presidential Debate gets more and more exciting, the American Center is organizing a month long “Presidential Campaign Trivia Quiz” for its members. Quiz sheets are available at the American Library and members can consult library resources while completing them! Winners will be announced at the end of the month and given prizes! So rush for your copy of the Campaign Trivia Quiz — the last day for submission is May 30. **Contact: American Library: 3984-6398/ 3984-6399.**

All programs are subject to change. Please confirm closer to the date of the event.



Film Show
PRETTY WOMAN

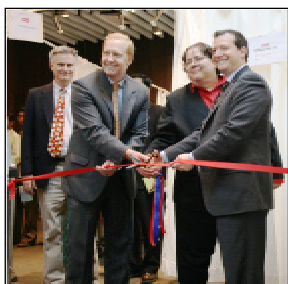
May 30 : American Center, Kolkata

This move is a romantic comedy about Vivian Ward who works as a prostitute on Hollywood Boulevard. When she runs into the prince of her dreams, a ruthless and wealthy businessman by the name of Edward Lewis, she realizes that she could be more than just a girl from the sidewalk. **Contact: American Library: 3984-6398.**

Did You Know?

- *The American Library offers over 18,000 books at your fingertips!*
- *The library is now open on Saturdays!*
- *You can enjoy film shows every month at the American Center!*
- *Children are welcome to accompany parents!*
- *As a member, you are entitled to free internet usage at the library!*

The month in photos!



Deputy Assistant Secretary Feigenbaum inaugurates the Health Fair



Governor Gandhi addresses the Landmarks of New York exhibition



U.S. Speaker Dickenson interacts on the 2008 Presidential Primaries



Director American Center Kelly at an Earth Day contest for students



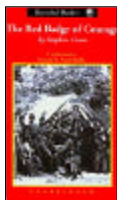
Consul General Jardine at a Green Biz Quiz by Indian Chamber of Commerce



U.S. Speaker Susman addresses an audience on Right-to-Information

ADDITIONS TO OUR AUDIO / BOOK COLLECTION

MY ANTONIA by Willa Cather. On 6 cassettes.



Willa Cather (1873-1947) is considered to be one of the major fiction writers of the 20th century. *My Antonia* chronicles the life of Antonia, a Bohemian immigrant woman, as seen through the eyes of Jim, the man unable to forget her. Jim, now a successful New York lawyer, recollects his upbringing on a Nebraska farm. Even after twenty years, Antonia continues to live a romantic life in his imagination. When he returns to Nebraska, he finds Antonia has lived a battered life. Although the man to whom she dedicated her life abandons her, she remains strong and full of courage.

THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES by Nathaniel Hawthorne. On 8 Cassettes.

The House of the Seven Gables is Hawthorne's (1804-1864) most humorous novel, and tells the story of a house that is cursed by a man who was hanged centuries ago for witchcraft. The house is haunted by the ghosts, and wrapped in the fear of the living. This psychological drama focuses on the Pyncheon family that has lived for generations under a dead man's curse and it is through love that their house is finally exorcised of its sinful past.



THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE by Stephen Crane. On 4 Cassettes.



Bored with farm life, and anxious for some excitement, Henry Fleming sets off to join the Union troops fighting the Civil War. An inexperienced fighter, he is anxious to get into battle to prove his patriotism and courage. He swaggers to keep up his spirits waiting for battle, but when suddenly thrust into the slaughter he is overcome with blind fear and runs from the field of battle. The unnamed battle in the novel has been identified as that at Chancellorsville. While considered one of the most compelling stories of warfare of all times, Stephen Crane had never seen a battle when he wrote *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1895.

NUCLEAR FIRST STRIKE: CONSEQUENCES OF A BROKEN TABOO by George H. Quester. The John Hopkins Uni. Press, 2006, 159 pp.

This provocative and timely work examines various scenarios in which the deployment of nuclear weapons could occur, the probable consequences of such an escalation, the likely world reactions, and the plausible policy ramifications. Rather than projecting the physical damage that would result from nuclear attacks, George H. Quester offers an exploration of the political, psychological, and social aftermath of nuclear conflict.



U.S. - INDIAN STRATEGIC COOPERATION INTO THE 21st CENTURY: MORE THAN WORDS edited by Sumit Ganguly, Brian Shoup and Andrew Scobell. Routledge, 2006. 226 pp.



Drawing on new information and with contributions from both academics and policymakers, this wide ranging volume analyses the strategic convergence of these two states while explaining why important differences do remain. These notably include questions pertaining to the future of India's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, U.S. - Pakistan ties and India's links with Iran. The contributors to this volume explore in a novel light areas of cooperation and discord in this merging relationship and offer suggestions for expanding the scope and dimensions of future collaboration.